

Amendments to the Claims

Listing of Claims

1-7. (Canceled)

8. (Currently Amended) A one-piece connector unit for attachment to the barrel of a sample tube receiver and a cover assembly comprising:

said connector unit having a first end, a second end, and a central portion  
between said first and second ends, said central portion being adapted for attachment to said a barrel such that said second end is located within the barrel,

said first end terminating in a blunted piercing tip,

said second end including a hollow needle terminating in a sharpened piercing member tip,

a flexible sleeve enclosing said hollow needle;

said unit defining an internal flow path extending between said first and second piercing tips

a removable first cover enclosing said blunted piercing tip,

a removable second cover enclosing said sharpened piercing tip

wherein each of said covers comprises an open and a closed end, wherein said open ends face one another and abut each other.

9. (Canceled)

10. (Canceled)

11. (Currently amended) The unit of Claim 9 8 wherein said first end comprises a hub including a plurality of radial fins thereon and said removable cover enclosing said first piercing member comprising an inner wall, said inner wall including a plurality of slots for receiving said fins.

12. (Canceled)

13. (Canceled)

14. (New) A ready-to-use, one-piece connector unit for attachment to the barrel of a sample tube receiver, said unit comprising:

a first end, a second end and a central portion between said first and second ends, said central portion being adapted for attachment to a barrel of a sample tube receiver;

said first end terminating in a blunted piercing tip, said first end being integrally formed with said central portion;

said second end including a hollow needle terminating in a sharpened piercing tip;

a flexible sleeve enclosing said hollow needle; and

an internal flow path extending between said first and second piercing tips.